GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5696
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2003
ARREST OF INDIAN FISHERMEN BY PAKISTAN
DALPAT SINGH PARASTE;SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Indian fishermen and their boats were captured by Pakistan Marine Security Agency recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for the release of these fishermen and boats from Pak custody?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a & b) As per available information, 282 Indian fishermen and 54 fishing boats are currently in custody in Pakistan.

(c) Government have consistently taken up the issue of their release and repatriation with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels. As a result, Government of Pakistan provided consular access to 245 fishermen on March 26-29, 2003. Verification of their nationality is under process by the concerned state authorities. Government of Pakistan has also been asked to provide consular access to the remaining fishermen in its custody. Earlier, 280 Indian fishermen and 44 boats had been released by Pakistan on 24.2.2003.